REMARKS

Claims 2, 4, and 5 are pending in the present application; all claims were rejected in the present Office Action. The Examiner rejected Claims 2 and 4 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by PCT Application, International Publication Number WO 93/21715 (Wong) and Claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wong in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,074,435 (Rojestal) and U.S. Patent No. 5,421,017 (Scholz). Claims 2, 4, and 5 were amended to more clearly recite the present invention.

When new versions of software are distributed, not all subsystems are able to install them right away. This can create an incompatibility problem, for example, where the newer version of the software uses five field messages while the old version uses only four field messages. This can cause disruption of communication between subsystems using different versions of the software programs because the messages will not be recognized due to the difference in message sizes. Sometimes new versions of software programs can be coded to recognize both, the new and the old formats; however, old versions cannot be changed.

The present invention enables subsystems using **different versions of the same software program** to recognize different size messages. This is achieved in order to process all messages sent between the subsystems without these messages being discarded due to message size variations of different versions of the same software program executing on communicating subsystems. This is achieved through use of a field in the message's header indicating the version of the software program executing on the sending or source subsystem.

The present invention performs a two step identification/correction process to resolve the issue of version/message size incompatibility. A message is sent from a source subsystem to a target subsystem. The source subsystem includes the version of its own software program in the message header of the message sent to a target subsystem. The target subsystem compares the version in the received message header with the version of the software currently used on the target subsystem. If the versions match, the message including the added information field, i.e., five field message, will be processed. Alternatively, if the version of software currently used on the source subsystem is not equivalent to the version of software currently used on the target subsystem, the message NOT

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including the added information field, i.e., four field message according to the old format, will be processed.

Wong does not teach that. The Examiner's attention is directed to page 16, lines 11-22 of Wong, which reads as follows:

> "Inclusion of the software package and/or version information within the signalling information field of messages conforming to the protocol structured in accordance with the system of the present invention also may prove useful as a check to insure that the signals received from a cooperating exchange are valid. For example, an exchange with a specific software package should only send messages with a specific SIF field length. If however the actual length of the SIF field within a message received from a sending exchange does not correspond to the capabilities of the specific package identified in the message, the message may be assumed to be corrupt and/or incompatible and thus would not require any further processing by the receiving exchange." (Emphasis Added.)

This section clearly states that only messages with a specific field length are processed; the rest are discarded as corrupt. This, especially the underscored section, teaches away from the recitations in the amended claims. Contrary to Wong, the present invention enables all messages to be processed; messages never get tossed aside.

The Examiner points to sections of Wong that discuss software package identification. However, neither the Examiner-selected, nor any other section of Wong teach or describe "comparing the version in the received message header with the version of the message processing software executing on the target subsystem", "processing, in the target subsystem, the received message including the added information field, if the source subsystem version is equivalent to the target subsystem version", and "processing, in the target subsystem, the received message excluding the added information field, if the source subsystem version is not equivalent to the target subsystem version", as recited in amended Claims 2 and 4 of the present invention.

Similarly, regarding independent Claim 5, Wong, Rojestal, Scholz, or their combination do not teach or describe "detecting, in the target subsystem, the version value from the received message header", "processing in the target subsystem, all fields of the received message using the updated version of the software, if the version value of the message processing software executing on the source subsystem is equivalent to a version value of the message processing software executing on the target subsystem", and "processing, in the target subsystem, fields of the received message known to the previous version of the software, if the version value of the message processing

software executing on the source subsystem is not equivalent to the version value of the message processing software executing on the target subsystem", as recited in amended Claim 5.

Based on the amendments and arguments presented above with respect to Claims 2, 4, and 5, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 2, 4, and 5 overcome the rejections. Accordingly, all of the claims pending in the Application, namely, Claims 2, 4, and 5, are believed to be in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference or personal interview would facilitate resolution of any remaining matters, the Examiner may contact Applicant's attorney at the number given below.

Respectfully submitted,

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